
A WARNING AND GUIDANCE FOR THE MUSLIM UMMAH

A CALL TO REFLECTION

*Navigating Political Strife in the Light of
the Qur'an and Sunnah*

On participation in contemporary political protests —
reflections drawn from the events of December 2019
at Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University

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INTRODUCTION

The Current Crisis

In these turbulent times, the Muslim community in India faces immense political pressure and is frequently presented with opportunities to join protests and political marches. However, as believers, we are commanded not to act on emotion alone, but on clarity, wisdom, and the divine guidance found in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This advisory serves as a profound reflection on recent events, specifically drawing lessons from the events of December 2019 at Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). We examine these occurrences through the prism of divine revelation, urging the Ummah to pause, ponder, and protect itself from being used as a tool in a political machinery that has previously proven hostile toward it.

PART I

A Revisit to the 2019 Incident — The Ultimate Lesson in Betrayal

Before considering participation in any march or protest today, it is worth looking back to December 2019. During the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), students of JMI and AMU stood up for their civil rights. The response that followed is remembered as follows:

Brutality. Lathi charges, injuries, and the targeting of students and women.

Derision and mockery. At the time, some individuals and groups openly chanted slogans in support of the Delhi Police response.

The perceived hypocrisy. Some of those same individuals and groups who cheered the police action against Muslims are now calling for unity on the streets — “funny how it was acceptable until it happened to you.”

Reflection. The Qur'an calls the believer to guard against naivety. To set aside the memory of 2019 too quickly in order to join a new political cause is, on this reading, to act without strategic foresight.

PART II

The Qur'anic Rule — Al-Walā' wal-Barā' (Loyalty and Disassociation)

This section rests on Sūrah Al-Mumtahanah, specifically verses 1 and 4, which have circulated widely within the community as a point of reflection.

SŪRAH AL-MUMTAHANAH, 60:1

“O believers! Do not take My enemies and yours as trusted allies, showing them affection even though they deny what has come to you of the truth...”

SŪRAH AL-MUMTAHANAH, 60:4

“You already have an excellent example in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people, ‘We totally dissociate ourselves from you and from whatever you worship besides Allah. We reject you. The enmity and hatred that has arisen between us and you will last until you believe in Allah alone.’”

Reading These Verses in the Current Context

These verses are widely understood to establish a principle of barā'ah (dissociation) from those who oppress believers, deny their rights, or cause them harm.

In the context of the 2019 events and the debate over Article 370 and the status of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, this reading holds that entities which supported action seen as harmful to the community's rights, or which cheered the police response, have placed themselves at odds with it. On this view, joining forces with the same entities in a political protest today would sit uneasily with the principle above — it would risk extending affection or tactical allegiance toward those who have, in this reading, already shown themselves opposed to the community's interests.

PART III

A Test of Trust and Suspicion

The historical backdrop of the 2019 restructuring is relevant here: while Article 370 was revoked, Union Territory status for Ladakh was pursued at the same time. For some Ladakhis this fulfilled a long-standing aspiration; for many Kashmiri Muslims it was experienced as the dismantling of a special status and a historical identity.

The community is now, in this reading, being invited into a different set of protests. The essay counsels a cautious approach, and poses the question: why would those who cheered the community's suffering in 2019 now seek its company in the streets?

Two Reasons for Caution

A question of sincerity. On this view, political movements are driven primarily by power dynamics, and a community's safety is not always their first concern.

A prophetic caution. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: "A believer is not bitten from the same hole twice" (Sahih al-Bukhārī). This is invoked here as a caution against re-entering situations of conflict alongside those associated with past harm.

PART IV

Practical Guidelines in Light of the Sunnah

The essay frames the Prophet's example as one that prioritised safety, dignity, and communal cohesion. Four questions are offered as a framework for reflection:

1 Will this protest preserve or endanger life?

The 2019 events are cited as a caution that political agitation can put participants' safety at risk.

2 Is the leadership of this movement trustworthy?

The essay suggests that leaders who did not speak up in 2019 — or who justified the police response — should not be looked to now.

3 Is there a spiritual alternative?

Duā' (supplication) is presented as the believer's primary recourse. The Prophet's endurance of persecution in Tā'if without joining a political faction is offered as a model.

4 Could this fall under fitnah (discord)?

Protests involving mixed motives or the risk of violence are, in this reading, best avoided as a matter of communal self-protection.

PART V

A Humble Request to the Ummah

“A humble request to ponder over what has happened with you in the past, and to think twice before renewing support...”

The essay closes with three calls to its readers:

Withhold participation. It counsels against lending physical presence, emotional energy, or online support to the protests it discusses.

Preserve the community. Staying away from these marches is framed as a way of protecting women, elders, and the young from potential harm.

Practise barā'ah. Readers are urged not to be swayed by political messaging, and to keep in view the limits described above.

The Path Forward

In place of street protest, the essay recommends: strengthening local Muslim communities; pursuing justice through lawful and dignified means; and turning to Allah in duā' and salāh for protection and relief.

A Duā' for the Community

“Rabbanā lā tuzigh qulūbanā ba'da idh hadaytanā wa hab lanā min ladunka raḥmah, innaka antal Wahhāb.”

“Our Lord, do not let our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from Yourself. Indeed, You are the Bestower.”

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